(b) whether Government propose to take action against these officials; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND) NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) to (c) C. B. I., Shillong, has registered a case against a Deputy Director and a Finance and Accounts Officer of ONGC for fraudulent payment of Rs. 2, 63, 313.

Investigation is in progress. The officers. concerned have been placed, under suspension pending investigation.

One Director of ONGC, Eastern Region was dismissed from the service of ONGC in December, 1986, for not following the prescribed procedures which resulted in over payment of Rs 40, 94, 002. 61.

Increase of Crude Oil prices

1339. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that many oil producing countries of the OPEC have decided to increase prices of their crude oil;

(b) if so, the names of such countries and the extent by which the prices of crude oil are proposed to be increased by them; and

(c) the measures being taken by Government to contain the adverse effect of such increase of oil prices on the Indian economy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) and (b) According to press reports OPEC have decided to adopt a fixed price structure, w. e. f. 1-2-1987. The price structure of $ 18|bbl is based on a basket of seven crudes alongwith their prices as indicated below:

	$|bbl
Sahara blend, Algeria	18. 87
Minas, Indonesia	17. 56
Bonny light, Nigeria	18. 92
Arab light, S. Arabia	17. 52
Dubai, UAE	17. 42
Tia Juana light Venezuela	17. 62
Isthmus, Mexico	18. 07

(c) The Government are constantly watching the market situation to derive the best advantage in its purchases of crude oil.

Agreement with foreign countries regarding Oil Exploration

1340. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA; Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to enter into agreement with certain foreign countries to undertake oil exploration and extraction in those countries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the particulars about any such agreements to undertake oil exploration in those countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) and (b) Government of India cooperate with certain foreign countries in the areas of hydrocarbons industry. Government of India and the Government of Socialist Republic of Vietnam have agreed, in principle, to cooperate for exploration of hydro-carbons in Vietnam.